EHR: HINDRANCE OR HELP? 
USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENGAGE YOUR PATIENT

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OBJECTIVES
At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:
• Utilize common sense strategies to improve communication during patient encounters that involve an HER
• Appropriately introduce an EHR to a patient during a medical visit.
• Use EHR ergonomics such as computer placement and body positioning to enhance patient-provider relationships

EHR HAS CLINICAL ADVANTAGES
• Legible
• Available constantly
• Automatic population of data (decreased likelihood of transcription errors)
• Communication about patient attached to chart
• ID, date & time stamp of every access (medicolegal)
• Authorized access tracked (HIPAA violations?)

Panchanathan, U of A
EHR HAS CLINICAL ADVANTAGES

• Data collection
• Office physical space (must keep all records for 7 yrs after last visit / 7 yrs after age 18 for peds)
• CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT
• Goal to decrease T2 time through clinical decision support
  • T1 time – bench to clinical trials
  • T2 time – clinical recommendation to standard clinical practice
  • Currently T1+T2 = 17 years on average

Panchanathan, U of A

EHR IMPACTS PATIENT PROVIDER COMMUNICATION

• Toll E. The cost of technology. JAMA. 2012;307(23):2497-2498

EHR HAS BENEFITS

• Increased satisfaction
• Improved ability to partner with patient
• Increased accuracy / fewer errors
• Increased security & confidentiality
• Why E-Chart?
• “EHR Ergonomics” enhances the clinician-patient relationship

Silverman, U of A
EXPLAIN THE EHR TO THE PATIENT

1. Greet patient first
2. Articulate the benefits of using the EHR
3. Address concerns about confidentiality
4. Position the laptop for effective use
5. Actively involve patient in viewing & reviewing

PREPARE A SCRIPT FOR EHR INTRODUCTION

• Today I will be using a computerized health record to review your vital signs.
• This system helps prevent errors by being more readable and ensuring that we are able to access the most complete and up to date information about you. (Benefits)
• I will need to take a moment to log into the system because the computerized health record system keeps your information secure and confidential by limiting access to it. (Confidentiality concerns)

POSITION LAPTOP APPROPRIATELY

• Provider & patient can both see screen*
• Provider position is open to patient
• Maintain eye contact & communicate fluidly
USE THE EHR TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION

• Share the screen with the patient for visualization:
  • Growth curve or weight loss trends
  • Med reconciliation
  • Problem list review
• Educate with graphics & pictures
• Encourage patients to correct inaccuracies

WHY IS “EHR ERGONOMICS” IMPORTANT?

1. Use of EHRs can improve patient engagement, information exchange and clinical decision support. 3, 4
2. Studies suggest that collaborative EMR use contributes to improved quality of care, enhanced decision-making process, enhanced patient participation in their care, and enriched patient-centered interactions. 1, 3
3. The EHR is perceived by some to be a “third party to a conversation” between patient and physician, whereby the EHR forms its own identity and both physicians and patients project their perceptions onto this identity. 4, 5
4. Physicians with good baseline communication skills tend to integrate exam room computing into their relationships with patients whereas physicians with poor baseline skills tend to create communication barriers when using computers in the exam room. 6
5. Effective use of computers in clinician-patient communication may largely depend on clinicians being trained with baseline skills in EHR use. 7

CAN YOU CHART DURING THE PATIENT INTERVIEW?

• Sensitive details

• When comfort / listening is a priority

• When speaking other languages

• Role-play
YOU CAN TEACH EHR CHARTING BASICS

- Patient specific versus encounter specific data
- What information is best as narrative? Best as discrete data (menus, clickboxes, etc.)?
- Discuss choices with colleagues
- Find information in an EHR
  - [http://www.practicefusion.com/pages/free_ehr.html](http://www.practicefusion.com/pages/free_ehr.html)

Sikeman & Panchanathan, U of A

IT WORKS

- University of Arizona medical students, accepted for publication in Academic Medicine

REFERENCES

- Howard Silverman, MD, MS & S. Soumya Panchanathan, MD, MS. Electronic health record lecture & lab presentation series. University of Arizona College of Medicine, Phoenix.